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second user such that the first user is notified of the identify of any user in the saved user list that is accessing the same hypertext document, wherein the program is configured to maintain the saved user list by performing at least one of adding a third user to the saved user list and removing the second user from the saved user list in response to user input received from the first user.

REMARKS

This paper is submitted in reply to the Office Action dated August 6, 2002, within the three-month period for response. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested.

In the subject Office Action, claims 1-2, 5-11, and 14-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,020,884 to MacNaughton et al. Furthermore, claims 3-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over MacNaughton et al. in view of "Chat Comp: Lobby," Yahoo!, <http://chat.yahoo.com> downloaded 11/18/98, (hereinafter Yahoo), and claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over MacNaughton et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,061,716 to Moncreiff.

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejections to the extent that they are maintained. Applicants have canceled claims 10, 23-24 and 37-39 without prejudice, and amended claims 1, 7, 9, 11, 13-14, 19 and 25. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is being added by the above amendments, as the amendments are fully supported in the specification, drawings and claims as originally filed. Attached hereto is a copy of the currently pending claims including a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attachment is captioned "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made."

Turning now to the rejections, and in particular to the rejection of independent claim 1, this claim generally recites a method of providing access to hypertext documents in a multi-user computer environment, where the method includes tracking accesses to a

plurality of preexisting hypertext documents by a plurality of users, and notifying a first user that is currently accessing one of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents of the identity of a second user that is accessing the same hypertext document. Claim 1 has also been amended to additionally recite that the method also includes maintaining on behalf of the first user a saved user list that identifies at least the second user such that the first user is notified of the identify of any user in the saved user list that is accessing the same hypertext document. Furthermore, the claim has been amended to clarify that maintaining the saved user list includes at least one of adding a third user to the saved user list and removing the second user from the saved user list in response to user input received from the first user. In addition, claims 13 and 14 have been amended for consistency with the amendments to claim 1.

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner relies on MacNaughton et al. to teach a method of providing access to hypertext documents in a multi-user computer environment, including tracking accesses to hypertext documents by multiple users, and notifying one user when another user is viewing the same hypertext document. Moreover, with respect to the concept of a "saved user list", which was originally recited in claim 13, the Examiner asserts that MacNaughton et al. discloses such a user list at col. 21, lines 4-24.

However, MacNaughton et al., and in particular, the specific passage cited by the Examiner, deals only with the concept of a community membership list, such that the activities of the particular members of a community are tracked and used to notify members of the activities of other members.

Claim 1, in contrast, focuses on the use of a saved user list that is maintained on behalf of the first user. Also, this saved user list is used to determine when a particular user (the first user) is notified of the activities of other tracked users - namely when other users identified in the saved user list are viewing the same hypertext document. Furthermore, to further clarify the localized nature of a user list with respect to its owner, claim 1 now essentially recites that the saved user list is managed by its owner (the first

user) by either adding a third user to the list, removing the second user from the list, or both, in response to user input from the first user.

The community membership lists of MacNaughton et al. are maintained on behalf of all of the members of a community, rather than on behalf of any particular user. Moreover, there is no disclosure in the reference of any functionality that would permit any member of the community to add or remove other users to or from the community membership list. Members likely may join or leave as they wish; however, they are not permitted to modify the membership as it pertains to other users.

As such, Applicants respectfully submit that MacNaughton et al. fails to disclose the concept of a saved user list that is maintained on behalf of a first user, and where the membership of that user list is maintained by the first user by adding or removing other users to or from that user list in response to user input from the first user. Accordingly, claim 1 is novel over MacNaughton et al.

Claim 1 is also non-obvious over MacNaughton et al., as there is no suggestion in the reference, or elsewhere in the prior art, of maintaining saved user lists on behalf of specific users. Given that MacNaughton et al. is focused on the establishment of centrally-managed communities, MacNaughton et al. in fact teaches away from a system whereby individual users are permitted to manage their own dedicated user lists. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is non-obvious over the prior art of record, and reconsideration and allowance of claim 1, as well as of claims 2-6, 13-18 and 20-22 which depend therefrom, are respectfully requested.

Next, with respect to claim 7, this claim has essentially been amended to independent form. Claim 7 adds to the original claim 1, the concept of notifying a first user of the location of another hypertext document currently being viewed by a third user. Put another way, claim 7 adds the feature of notifying the first user of what document is being viewed by another user, when the other user is not viewing the same document as the first user.

In rejecting claim 7, the Examiner relies on col. 7, line 57 to col. 8, line 57 of MacNaughton et al. However, while MacNaughton et al. does disclose notifying one user of other users that are viewing the same document (*see, e.g.*, col. 8, lines 2-3), MacNaughton et al., and particularly the passage cited by the Examiner, does not disclose notifying users of those documents being viewed by other users when those other viewers are not viewing the same document. Furthermore, there is no suggestion in the reference, or elsewhere in the prior art, of the desirability of such a feature. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 7 is novel and non-obvious over the prior art of record. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 7, as well as of claim 8 which depends therefrom, are respectfully requested.

Next, with respect to claim 9, this claim has been amended to independent form, and to incorporate the subject matter of original claim 10. Claim 10 has also been canceled without prejudice. As such, claim 9 recites, in addition to the subject matter in original claim 1, the concept of maintaining a navigation history for a second user, where the navigation history includes a set of hypertext documents previously accessed by the second user. Moreover, the claim recites the concept of notifying a first user of the set of hypertext documents in the navigation history.

In rejecting claim 10, the Examiner relies on col. 7, line 57 to col. 8, line 57 of MacNaughton et al., just as with claim 7. However, while MacNaughton et al. does disclose notifying one user of other users that are viewing the same document, MacNaughton et al., and particularly the passage cited by the Examiner, does not disclose notifying one user of a set of documents in a navigation history associated with another user. Furthermore, there is no suggestion in the reference, or elsewhere in the prior art, of the desirability of such a feature. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 9 is novel and non-obvious over the prior art of record. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 9 are therefore respectfully requested.

Next, with respect to claim 11, this claim has essentially been amended to independent form. As such, claim 11 recites, in addition to the subject matter in original

claim 1, the concept of maintaining a navigation history for a second user, where the navigation history includes a set of hypertext documents previously accessed by the second user. Moreover, the claim now recites the concept of displaying a hypertext document that includes a link to a second hypertext document to a first user. Furthermore, the claim now recites the feature of displaying within the first hypertext document, and in association with the link, an indication that the second hypertext document is in the navigation history for the second user.

For example, consistent with claim 11, a link in a hypertext document might be displayed to a user in a unique color, or displayed with a unique icon, to permit the user to readily determine when that link leads to another document that is in the navigation history of another user.

In rejecting claim 11, the Examiner again relies on the same passage in MacNaughton et al. (col. 7, line 57 to col. 8, line 57). However, as discussed above in connection with claims 7 and 9, MacNaughton et al. only discloses notifying one user of other users that are viewing the same document as that user. Applicants can find no other disclosure or suggestion in MacNaughton et al., however, as to any feature that is even arguably analogous to displaying within a hypertext document, and in association with a link, an indication that the link is for a document that is in the navigation history of another user. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 11 is novel and non-obvious over the prior art of record. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 11, and of claim 12 which depends therefrom, are therefore respectfully requested.

Next, with respect to claim 19, this claim has essentially been amended to independent form, and further to clarify that a combined list of favorite links is associated with only those users that are currently viewing the same hypertext document as the first user. As such, claim 19 recites, in addition to the subject matter in original claim 1, the concept of displaying a list of favorite links to the first user, where the list of favorite links is built by combining lists of favorite links associated with the other users that are currently viewing the same hypertext document as the first user.

In rejecting claim 19, the Examiner once again relies on the same passage in MacNaughton et al. (col. 7, line 57 to col. 8, line 57). However, while MacNaughton et al. does arguably disclose the concept of maintaining a shared or community bookmark list that is accessible to community members, there is no disclosure or suggestion in MacNaughton et al. of any functionality that is even arguably analogous to restricting those bookmarks or favorite links that are displayed to a particular member based upon a compilation of bookmarks associated with only those members from the community that are viewing the same document as that member. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 19 is novel and non-obvious over the prior art of record. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 19 are therefore respectfully requested.

Next, with respect to independent claim 25, this claim has been amended to additionally recite that the claimed program is further configured to maintain, on behalf of a first user, a saved user list that identifies at least a second user such that the first user is notified of the identify of any user in the saved user list that is accessing the same hypertext document. The claim also has been amended to recite that the program is configured to maintain the saved user list by performing at least one of adding a third user to the saved user list and removing the second user from the saved user list in response to user input received from the first user. As such, claim 25 is patentable over the prior art of record for the same reasons as presented above for claim 1. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 1, and of claims 26-36 which depend therefrom, are therefore respectfully requested.

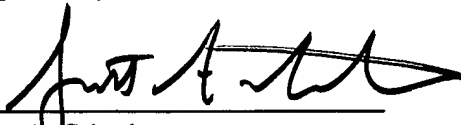
Finally, with respect to independent claims 23, 37 and 38, each of these claims has been canceled without prejudice, thereby rendering the rejections thereof moot. Applicants reserve the right to refile these claims in this or another copending application.

In summary, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are novel and non-obvious over the prior art of record. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are therefore respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding the foregoing, or which might otherwise further this case onto allowance, the Examiner

may contact the undersigned at (513) 241-2324. Moreover, if any other charges or credits are necessary to complete this communication, please apply them to Deposit Account 23-3000.

6 NOV 2002
Date

Respectfully submitted,



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Claims 10, 23-24 and 37-39 have been canceled without prejudice, and claims 1, 7, 9, 11, 13-14, 19 and 25 have been amended as outlined below. The currently pending claims, including the aforementioned amendments, are as follows:

1. (Once Amended) A method of providing access to hypertext documents in a multi-user computer environment, the method comprising:

(a) tracking accesses to a plurality of preexisting hypertext documents by a plurality of users; [and]

(b) notifying a first user that is currently accessing one of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents of the identity of a second user that is accessing the same hypertext document; and

(c) maintaining on behalf of the first user a saved user list that identifies at least the second user such that the first user is notified of the identify of any user in the saved user list that is accessing the same hypertext document, wherein maintaining the saved user list includes at least one of adding a third user to the saved user list and removing the second user from the saved user list in response to user input received from the first user.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein tracking accesses to the plurality of preexisting hypertext document includes maintaining a list of users that access each hypertext document, and wherein notifying the first user includes notifying the first user of the identity of each user in the list of users.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein notifying the first user of the identity of each user in the list of users includes displaying the list of users to the first user.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein notifying the first user of the identity of each user in the list of users includes separately notifying the first user of each user from the list of users that is no longer accessing the hypertext document.

5. The method of claim 2, wherein tracking accesses to the hypertext document further includes removing from the list of users a user that is no longer accessing the hypertext document.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the second user has a home hypertext document associated therewith, the method further comprising communicating to the first user a copy of the home hypertext document associated with the second user in response to user input from the first user.

7. (Once Amended) [The method of claim 1, further comprising] A method of providing access to hypertext documents in a multi-user computer environment, the method comprising:

(a) tracking accesses to a plurality of preexisting hypertext documents by a plurality of users;

(b) notifying a first user that is currently accessing one of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents of the identity of a second user that is accessing the same hypertext document; and

(c) notifying the first user of the location of [the] another hypertext document currently being viewed by a third user.

8. The method of claim 7, further comprising communicating to the first user a copy of the hypertext document currently being viewed by the third user.

9. (Once Amended) [The method of claim 1,] A method of providing access to hypertext documents in a multi-user computer environment, the method comprising:

(a) tracking accesses to a plurality of preexisting hypertext documents by a plurality of users; and

(b) notifying a first user that is currently accessing one of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents of the identity of a second user that is accessing the same hypertext document;

wherein tracking accesses to the hypertext document further includes maintaining a navigation history for the second user, the navigation history including a set of hypertext documents previously accessed by the second user, and wherein the method further comprises notifying the first user of the set of hypertext documents in the navigation history for the second user.

10. (Canceled).

11. (Once Amended) [The method of claim 9, further comprising] A method of providing access to hypertext documents in a multi-user computer environment, the method comprising:

(a) tracking accesses to a plurality of preexisting hypertext documents by a plurality of users; and

(b) notifying a first user that is currently accessing one of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents of the identity of a second user that is accessing the same hypertext document;

wherein tracking accesses to the hypertext document further includes maintaining a navigation history for the second user, the navigation history including a set of hypertext documents previously accessed by the second user, and wherein the method further comprises displaying a first hypertext document to the first user, the first hypertext document including a hypertext link to a second hypertext document that is in the

navigation history for the second user, wherein displaying the first hypertext document includes displaying within the first hypertext document and in association with the hypertext link an indication that the second hypertext document is in the navigation history for the second user.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein displaying the indication includes displaying the hypertext link to the second hypertext document in a color associated with the second user.

13. (Once Amended) The method of claim 1, [wherein the first user has associated therewith a saved user list identifying at least the second user, and] wherein notifying the first user of the identity of the second user includes notifying the first user of whether the second user is currently active in the multi-user computer environment.

14. (Once Amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising performing a predetermined list management operation on the user list in response to user input from the first user, the predetermined list management operation selected from the group consisting of [adding another user to the user list, removing a user from the user list,] sending a message to a user in the user list, navigating to a hypertext document currently being viewed by a user from the user list, and navigating to a home hypertext document for a user from the user list.

15. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

(a) associating a second hypertext document with the second user in response to user input from the second user; and

(b) notifying the first user of the association of the second hypertext document with the second user.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising communicating the second hypertext document to the first user in response to user input from the first user.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein associating the second hypertext document with the second user includes storing an identifier for the second hypertext document in a list of favorite links associated with the second user, and wherein notifying the first user of the association of the second hypertext document with the second user includes displaying the list of favorite links to the first user.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein displaying the list of favorite links is performed responsive to user input received from the first user while the first and second users are currently viewing the same hypertext document.

19. (Once Amended) [The method of claim 17, further comprising] A method of providing access to hypertext documents in a multi-user computer environment, the method comprising:

(a) tracking accesses to a plurality of preexisting hypertext documents by a plurality of users;

(b) notifying a first user that is currently accessing one of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents of the identity of a second user that is accessing the same hypertext document;

(c) associating a second hypertext document with the second user in response to user input from the second user; and

(b) notifying the first user of the association of the second hypertext document with the second user;

wherein associating the second hypertext document with the second user includes storing an identifier for the second hypertext document in a list of favorite links associated with the second user, wherein notifying the first user of the association of the second hypertext

document with the second user includes displaying the list of favorite links to the first user, and wherein the method further comprises building a list of favorite links associated with the hypertext document being viewed by the first user by combining lists of favorite links associated with [each user] only those users currently viewing the same hypertext document as the first user.

20. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

- (a) associating a second hypertext document with a first hypertext document in response to user input from the second user; and
- (b) notifying the first user of the association of the second hypertext document with the first hypertext document.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein associating the second hypertext document with the first hypertext document includes temporarily associating the second hypertext document with the first hypertext document such that the association therebetween is discarded whenever the second user is not active in the multi-user computer environment.

22. The method of claim 1, wherein tracking accesses to the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents is performed in a first computer, and wherein at least a portion of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents are stored externally from the multi-user computer environment.

23. (Canceled).

24. (Canceled).

25. (Once Amended) An apparatus, comprising:

(a) a memory; and

(b) a program, resident in the memory, the program configured to track accesses to a plurality of preexisting documents by a plurality of users, [and] to notify a first user among the plurality of users that is currently accessing one of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents of the identity of a second user among the plurality of users that is accessing the same hypertext document, and to maintain on behalf of the first user a saved user list that identifies at least the second user such that the first user is notified of the identify of any user in the saved user list that is accessing the same hypertext document, wherein the program is configured to maintain the saved user list by performing at least one of adding a third user to the saved user list and removing the second user from the saved user list in response to user input received from the first user.

26. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the program is further configured to maintain a list of users that access each hypertext document, and to notify the first user of the identity of each user in the list of users.

27. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the second user has a home hypertext document associated therewith, the program further configured to communicate to the first user a copy of the home hypertext document associated with the second user in response to user input from the first user.

28. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the program is further configured to retrieve a navigation history for the second user, the navigation history including a set of hypertext documents previously accessed by the second user.

29. The apparatus of claim 28, wherein the memory is disposed in a server computer, the apparatus further comprising a client computer coupled to the server computer, the client computer including a second memory and a second program resident in the second memory, the second program configured to display a first hypertext document to the first user, the first hypertext document including a hypertext link to a second hypertext document that is in the navigation history for the second user, the second program further configured to display within the first hypertext document an indication that the second hypertext document is in the navigation history for the second user.

30. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the program is further configured to associate a second hypertext document with the second user in response to user input from the second user; and to notify the first user of the association of the second hypertext document with the second user.

31. The apparatus of claim 30, wherein the program is further configured to store an identifier for the second hypertext document in a list of favorite links associated with the second user.

32. The apparatus of claim 30, wherein the program is further configured to build a list of favorite links associated with the hypertext document being viewed by the first user by combining lists of favorite links associated with each user currently viewing the same hypertext document as the first user.

33. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the program is further configured to associate a second hypertext document with a first hypertext document in response to user input from the second user, and to notify the first user of the association of the second hypertext document with the first hypertext document.

34. The apparatus of claim 33, wherein the program is further configured to temporarily associate the second hypertext document with the first hypertext document such that the association therebetween is discarded whenever the second user is not active.

35. The apparatus of claim 25, further comprising a first computer within which the memory is disposed, wherein the program is configured to retrieve at least a portion of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents from a second computer remote from the first computer and external from the apparatus.

36. The apparatus of claim 35, wherein the second computer is coupled to the first computer over the Internet.

37. (Canceled).

38. (Canceled).

39. (Canceled).